

are not any more religious than they ought to be. Rumor attributes an atmosphere of exclusiveness to these churches, a lack of fellowship, of a common interest and sympathy, somewhat suggestive of icebergs and arctic circles, and it may be that in these particulars the baseball match stands in a favorable contrast. However the question arises: Does the distinguished politician sincerely wish to find the real article of religion, and would he know it when he saw it? As a matter of fact he is not nearly so apt to find it, either in a baseball match or in a Fifth Avenue church, as in some humble country chapel, or some beautiful Christian home. Let him go to the right place, with the desire to find the right kind, and his quest will have its reward. Maybe he doesn't really want to find that kind. Maybe the kind that suits him best runs riot and rampant in the Sunday afternoon baseball game. There are plenty of people, and doubtless this politician is one of them, who consult their preferences before they consult God's will, and God's commandments. The Fifth Avenue religion is the kind your mammon worshipper prefers; the baseball religion is the kind your politician prefers; the saloon religion is the kind your bum prefers; the Sunday newspaper religion is the kind your worldling prefers; the horse racing religion is the kind your gambler prefers; the sleeping car religion is the kind your self indulgent Christian prefers. What kind of religion do you prefer?

Not So Easily Caught

The common house mouse, when it has once been caught in a trap and escaped, can not be caught again by any trap ever invented by man, so it is said. Pity the same can not be said about that very superior animal who stands on two feet and wears clothes. No trouble at all to get him into a trap the second time, or the hundredth time. When it comes to profiting by experience he hasn't got as much sense as a mouse, in some things at any rate. See him go again and again to that trap of a saloon. The rummy sets his trap not at all in vain, for the generation of fools and flies faileth not. Just so the gambler; just so the devil with his endless variety of self-indulgence traps. The human victim gets in again and again, stays longer each time, stays all the time finally. The wisest man advised us to go to the ant to learn wisdom. He might also have advised us to go to the mouse. A class of students once tied a goose in the Professor's chair. "I see you have a suitable teacher, this morning," said the latter as he turned away.

Asking Great Things

It is the privilege of every child of God to ask for great things. The best things of God's love, the richest gifts of heaven, are offered to each one of us on the very simple condition of asking. "Ask and ye shall receive." Why then should there be such poverty of soul, if it be true (and who doubts it) that the richest and choicest blessings of the Father can be had for the mere asking? Is it because we do not ask? Certainly not, but the "asking that is not in vain" implies two things: (1) A faith as large as the blessing we ask for. "According to your faith be it unto you." No one has a right to pray to the Father for a blessing

larger than his faith. The Lord can not consistently grant a blessing greater than the faith that asks. The larger blessing and the larger faith must go hand in hand. Let us remember this when we take our petitions to the Lord. (2) It also implies a proper use of the gifts God has already given us. The wise parent will not give to the child anything beyond what he uses judiciously. The prodigal asked for great things and the injudicious father granted the request, but it was to his own hurt. Our heavenly Father is too wise to make such a blunder. He knows our ability to receive and to use, and he dispenses gifts and blessings to his children according to the faith they possess and the ability to use wisely what he gives. If we have asked for the larger things and have not received, let us remember that the kind heavenly Father does not dispense love's richest and choicest blessings promiscuously. Let us first of all ask for the larger faith and prove ourselves worthy by a proper use of what God has already given us.

Cross the Line

We think of death as the line which divides between misery and happiness; and whatever our experience may be in this pilgrimage, whatever of profound sorrow and deep disappointment, we look forward to the time when, with this "mortal coil," we will leave behind us the shadows and the clouds, and enter "the world beautiful." But why should the Christian postpone the joy? Where Christ is there are unfailing delights, and Christ may even now be in our hearts, if but our hearts are open for his coming. And with Christ in our hearts we will think that we have already crossed the line which separates between the world's misery and heavenly bliss.

A Bad Bargain

"All that a man hath will he give for his life," is a proposition that depends upon the point of view. If we look upon this life as the sum total of existence, embodying its *summum bonum*, perhaps we would be ready to play quits with everything else provided we could play keeps with bread and bacon. Take the world with whatever equipment of moral courage, of hope, of lofty principle it can afford, and when it comes to a cool calculating bargain with Death, the grim Shadow may get all he asks. Men are always willing to give what they conceive to be the less valuable for what they conceive to be the more valuable. On the other hand they are not willing to give the greater for the less, and when a moral enlightenment and a spiritual force intervenes, when a man comes to see that love and faith are greater than life, that truth cannot be exchanged for breath, that eternal life is of more value than the temporal, he will hold the latter lightly when it comes to a choice between the two. Thus it was and is with the choice spirits of all ages, the world renouncers, the martyrs, the messengers of holiness in all lands. How magnificent is the heritage which is better than life, and how grand is that soul which has ceased to count this life and what this life offers as matters of paramount or even tantamount consequences. He has taken hold upon the unseen things which alone are the real things. All that he hath will he give for the endless life,—the less